

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 SY-05

OMB-01 SAM-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 DHA-02 AID-05 MCT-01

SSM-03 CU-02 AF-08 /120 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1714

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 089

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 7328

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION SEPTEMBER 8

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REF: BEIRUT 7303

1. SUMMARY: CHAMOUN IN DAMASCUS FOR WHAT MAY BE DECISIVE TALKS ON MILITARY SITUATION DURING NEXT FEW WEEKS. RUMORS ABOUND OF CONFEDERATION PLANS AMONG SYRIA, JORDAN AND LEBANESE RIGHT. JUNBLATT UNDER PRESSURE TO MODERATE HIS ANTI-SYRIAN STAND. GRAND MUFTI DISCUSSES HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH ASSAD. GEMAYEL CLAIMS WRITTEN CEASE-FIRE ACCORD BETWEEN KATAEB AND PALESTINIANS. MUSEUM AREA CROSSING VIRTUALLY CLOSED AS CLASHES AND BOMBARDMENT CONTINUE ALONG GREEN LINE. BEIRUT TENSE AS MILITARY SITUATION DETERIORATES AND FEARS OF SYRIAN MILITARY ACTION SPREAD. BOMBARDMENTS AND SMALL-SCALE GROUND ACTION CONTINUE IN BEIRUT SUBURBS, IN MOUNTAINS AND IN SOUTH LEBANON. INCREASINGLY ISRAELI ACTIVITY REPORTED IN SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

2. CHAMOUN. CAMILLE CHAMOUN IS IN DAMASCUS FOR FIRST TIME IN 22 YEARS AND MAY STAY TWO DAYS. HE REPORTEDLY SAYS HE DOUBTS EVOLUTION WILL CONTINUE TOWARD POLITICAL SOLUTION AND BELIEVES FIGHTING COULD INCREASE CONSIDERABLY BEFORE SEP 23. WE UNDERSTAND CHAMOUNIST CIRCLES HAVE NO FAITH IN POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS, HAVE ACCELERATED MILITARY PREPARATIONS AND ARE FULLY PREPARED TO GO AFTER A MILITARY SOLUTION. L'ORIENT LE JOUR COMMENTS THAT CHAMOUN/ASSAD CONVERSATIONS COULD BE DECIDING FACTOR ON WHETHER SYRIANS WILL BEGIN NEW MILITARY OPERATION IN LEBANON BEFORE SARKIS TAKES OVER.

3. CONFEDERATION RUMORS. RUMORS IN POLITICAL CIRCLES OF SECRET CONFEDERATION PLAN AMONG LEBANESE RIGHT, SYRIA AND JORDAN. AS SOUHOUIFYA SAYS IDEA OF A SYRIAN-LEBANESE-JORDANIAN CONFEDERATION IS NOT ADVOCATED BY ANY RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS BUT A PLAN FOR "MILITARY, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COORDINATION" IS BEING EXAMINED. AS SOUHOUIFYA SAYS THIS COORDINATION HAD BEEN PROPOSED BY SYRIA BEFORE SARKIS ELECTION IN MAY AND HAS BECOME BASIS ON WHICH SYRIA INTENDS TO NEGOTIATE WITH LEBANON AND JORDAN. HOWEVER, PHALANGE RADIO QUOTES CHAMOUN SEP 7 SAYING SUBJECT HAS NOT BEEN DISCUSSED IN ANY LEBANESE-SYRIAN TALKS TO DATE. MIDDLE EAST
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NEWS AGENCY QUOTES "ARAB SOURCES IN AMMAN" THAT ASSAD, HUSSEIN AND SARKIS WILL MEET SEP 18 IN DAMASCUS TO "COORDINATE ACTIONS."

4. JUNBLATT AND ARAFAT. KAMAL JUNBLATT MET SEP 7 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT, FOLLOWING SESSION WITH CALL FOR REFENDUM ON CONFEDERATION PROJECT HE SAYS SYRIA HAS PROPOSED TO LEBANESE RIGHTISTS.

WE UNDERSTAND JUNBLATT UNDER PRESSURE FROM OTHER DRUZE LEADERS TO BACK DOWN FROM HIS STRONG ANTI-SYRIAN STAND. WE HAVE A REPORT SHEIKH AKL DRUZE HAS BEEN INVITED TO DAMASCUS FOR DISCUSSIONS AND HAS MET WITH ARAFAT TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE RAPPROCHEMENT AMONG THE SYRIANS, THE PALESTINIANS AND JUNBLATT. AL MUHARRIR SAYS THAT REPORT TO GRAND MUFTI ON HIS DAMASCUS MEETINGS INDICATES THAT ASSAD IS PREPARED UNDERTAKE DIALOGUE WITH JUNBLATT, DESPITE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF KHADDAM. WE HAVE REPORT THAT ARAFAT WOULD BE WILLING VISIT DAMASCUS IF HE AND JUNBLATT RECEIVED INVITATION TO GO TOGETHER. JUNBLATT MET SEP 7 WITH CHAFIC WAZZAN OF SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL TO DISCUSS NM/ISLAMIC GROUP SOLIDARITY AND LATER WITH FATHER YOUAKIM MOBARAK WHO IS IN TOUCH WITH SARKIS. AL MOHARRIR SAYS JUNBLATT ALSO INTERESTED IN CONTACTS WITH EDDE'S NATIONAL UNITY FRONT. JUNBLATT FOLLOWED MOBARAK MEETING WITH ACCUSATION RIGHTISTS ARE PROVOKING INCIDENTS IN NATIONAL MUSEUM AREA TO KEEP SARKIS FROM POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS IN WEST BEIRUT. PRESS REPORTS ECHO JUNBLATT'S WORRIES THAT ACCELERATING VIOLENCE IS BLOCKING POLITICAL PROCESS AT A CRUCIAL STAGE.

5. GRAND MUFTI. MUFTI OF THE REPUBLIC MET SEP 7 WITH YASIR ARAFAT AND MOURABITOUN LEADER IBRAHIM KOLEILAT TO DISCUSS HIS RECENT DAMASCUS TRIP. IZZAT HARB OF "ANCIENS DES MAKASSED," WHO ACCOMPANIED MUFTI TO DAMASCUS, SAYS MUFTI MET SEVEN HOURS WITH ASSAD, ASKING HIM TO PULL BACK SYRIAN TROOPS FROM LEBANON. HARB SAYS ASSAD REFUSED, SAYING HIS OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON WERE NOT YET ATTAINED. IN AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT, MUFTI TOLD SHEIKH AKL CRUZE THAT SYRIANS WANT TO GIVE A LAST CHANCE TO THE AL PEACE EFFORT BUT, IF IT FAILS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ARE DETERMINED TO GO FOR A MILITARY SETTLEMENT BEFORE SEP 23.

6. GEMAYEL. PIERRE GEMAYEL SAYS THERE IS A WRITTEN ACCORD BETWEEN KATAEB AND PALESTINIANS ON CEASE-FIRE AND PALESTINIAN RETREAT FROM THE MOUNTAINS. GEMAYEL DID NOT DATE THE ACCORD BUT SAID SAEB SALEM HAS IT IN HIS POSSESSION. GEMAYEL SAID HE BELIEVES SOLUTION TO LEBANESE CRISIS, EITHER PARTITION OR CONFEDERATION, IS NEAR. HE SAYS HE WILL GO TO CAIRO NEXT WEEK FOR CONVERSATIONS AT SADAT'S INVITATION.

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1715

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 090

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 7328

U. AT THE MUSEUM. THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AREA
CHECKPOINT, THE ONLY CROSSOVER POINT BETWEEN EAST
AND WEST BEIRUT, IS NOW VIRTUALLY CLOSED DUE SNIPING
AND BOMBARDMENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS WHICH CONTINUE
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MORNING OF SEP 8. AL'S GENERAL GHONEIM CANCELLED HIS SEP 8 MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF LEBANESE FRONT IN WHAT SEEMED PROTEST TO BACK UP AL STATEMENT THAT RIGHTISTS HAVE BOMBARDED AL POSITIONS IN MUSEUM AREA. VOICE OF LEBANON (KATAEB) SAYS AL FORCES DEPLOYED IN MUSEUM AREA "HAVE DISAPPEARED" AND RADIO AMCHIT (FRANGIE) CLAIMS AL FORCES HAVE "DEFINITIVELY RETREATED" FROM AREA. AL SPOKESMAN DENIES CHARGES, SAYING ONLY ONE TANK HAS BEEN PULLED BACK. TWO AL TANKS HAVE BEEN DAMAGED AND ONE SUDANESE SOLDIER WOUNDED IN PAST 48 HOURS. AL MEDIATOR HASSAN SABRI KHOLI EXPECTED IN DAMASCUS SEP 7 AND IN BEIRUT SEP 9.

8. ON THE GROUND. BEIRUT VERY TENSE AS CENTER CITY CONFRONTATION AREA REMAINS ACTIVE AND INFILTRATION ATTEMPTS AND SHELLING REPORTED ALL ALONG GREEN LINE. AL MUHARRIR CLAIMS 250 SHELLS HAVE HIT WEST BEIRUT IN LAST 24 HOURS. CHIAH AND AIN EL-RUMMANEH REMAIN EMBROILED AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF HADETH AND KFARCHIMA HAVE BEEN SHELLED. IN THE MOUNTAINS, VIOLENT CLASHES BETWEEN ALEY AND KAHLE. VOICE OF LEBANON (KATAEB) CLAIMS LEFTISTS ATTACKED VILLAGE OF BAABDA AND THAT MORTAR FIRE CONTINUES IN AREA. RIGHTIST POSITIONS AT BASKINTA, BEIT MERI AND AND BROUMMANA HAVE BEEN SHELLED, WITH RESPONDING RIGHTIST BOMBARDMENTS OF LEFTIST/PALESTINIAN POSITIONS IN HIGH METN AREAS OF ZAAROUR, MTEIN AND SANNINE. ASSAFIR SAYS SYRIAN ARTILLERY IN THE BEKAA AND NEARBY MOUNTAINS HAS SHELLED LEFTIST/PALESTINIAN POSITIONS IN AINTOURA AND SURROUNDING AREA AND THAT SYRIAN FORCES HAVE ADVANCED ON QAMEL-TUTI ROAD. IN BEKAA, AL MUHARRIR SAYS SECURITY SITUATION STEADILY DETERIORATING AND SYRIANS ARRESTING PEOPLE DAILY. THE NORTH IS RELATIVELY CALM FOLLOWING CLASHES AROUND TRIPOLI AND SEVERAL HOURS OF HEAVY SHELLING ON TRIPOLI AND ZGHORTA. IN THE SOUTH PRESS REPORTS CONTINUED SYRIAN REINFORCEMENTS, BOMBARDMENTS AND "ATTEMPTS TO ADVANCE" IN JEZZINE AREA. RIGHTIST SOURCE REPORTS FORMATION OF CHRISTIAN-SHIITE PARTISAN FIGHTING UNITS IN TYRE, BENT JBEIL AND MERJAYOUN DISTRICTS IN ANTICIPATION OF PALESTINIAN ATTACKS.

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9. SOUTH OF THE BORDER. AL MUHARRIR CARRIES EXTENSIVE STORY ON ISRAELI ACTIVITY IN SOUTH LEBANON BORDER AREA. ISRAELI FORCES HAVE ACTUALLY OCCUPIED CHRISTIAN VILLAGES OF QLAY'AH, RMAYAH, AIN IBEL, DABEL AND ALMA

ASA'B, AND THREATEN VILLAGES OF YARINE, MIRWAHIN, BUSTAN AND DAHIRA. PAPER SAYS 22 CHRISTIAN OFFICERS AND 700 TROOPS NOW IN VILLAGES AFTER SEA VOYAGE FROM HOUNIEH TO ISRAEL. FORMER MINISTER JA'FAR EDDINE SAYS ISRAEL "IS NOW INVADING LEBANON IN AN ORGANIZED AND QUIET MANNER." WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION.

10. FRG OPPOSITION TO PARTITION. AN NAHAR REPORTS STATEMENT BY FRG CHARGE THAT TEMPORARY CONSULAR OFFICE IN JOUNIEH DOES NOT MEAN FRG PLANNING OPEN CONSULATE AND REITERATING FRG SUPPORT OF LEBANESE UNITY AND SOVEREIGNTY.
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